

CLAIMS

1. A security system (40) for consumer equipment (60), the system having:

5 a lock (10) for preventing use of the equipment, the lock having a receiver for receiving a key signal from an external source (90), the lock being arranged to check the key is valid, and if so, enable the use of the equipment, the system also having:

10 a wireless transmitter (20) for the equipment for broadcasting a beacon signal indicating stolen status, if the lock does not receive a valid key.

2. The security system of claim 1, the receiver being a wireless receiver and being integrated together with the wireless transmitter.

15 3. The security system of claim 1 or 2, incorporating an identifier which is traceable to an owner of the equipment.

4. The security system of claim 3, having an identifier communication means incorporated in the lock for use with authorised readers.

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5. The security system of claim 3, the identifier being broadcast by the wireless transmitter.

25 6. The security system of any preceding claim, having a tamper detector (360, 550) for detecting tampering with the system, and for preventing use of the equipment if tampering is detected.

7. The security system of any preceding claim, having an internal
30 battery power supply (500) for the wireless transmitter.

8. The security system of any preceding claim, arranged to transmit the beacon signal intermittently.

9. The security system of claim 3 or any claim depending on claim 3,
5 the identifier being encrypted.

10. The security system of any preceding claim, the lock being arranged to check for a valid secure key when the equipment is switched on.

10 11. The security equipment of any preceding claim, being arranged to check for a valid secure key periodically.

12. The security equipment of any preceding claim, the wireless transmitter comprising an RF tag.

15 13. The security equipment of any preceding claim, the wireless transmitter being arranged to send an SMS message.

14. The security equipment of any preceding claim, having a theft
20 detector (450) for triggering the broadcasting of the beacon signal.

15. The security equipment of any preceding claim, having a warning for indicating that the equipment is protected by a beacon signal transmitter or that tampering will result in disabling of the equipment..

25 16 . A security system (40) for consumer equipment (60), the system having:

a lock (510) for preventing use of the equipment, the lock having a receiver for receiving a key signal from an external source, the lock being
30 arranged to check the key is valid, and if so, enable the use of the equipment, the system also having:

an identifier, incorporated securely in the lock and traceable to an owner of the equipment in the case of theft of the equipment.

17. The security system of claim 16, having an identifier communication
5 means incorporated in the lock for use with authorised readers.

18. A security system (40) for consumer equipment (60), the system having:

a lock (550) for preventing use of the equipment, the lock having a
10 receiver for receiving a key signal from an external source, the lock being arranged to check the key is valid, and if so, enable the use of the equipment, the system also having:

a tamper detector (550) for detecting tampering with the system, and for permanently preventing use of the equipment if tampering is detected.
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19. Consumer equipment (60) having an equipment controller (475), and having the security system of any preceding claim, the controller being arranged to cooperate with the lock of the security system and to operate depending on the lock.
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20. The equipment of claim 19, having a remote key unit (90, 420) for sending the key to the security system.

21. The equipment of claim 19 or claim 20, the controller being
25 arranged to exchange encrypted information with the security system periodically, and continue operating depending on whether a valid response is received from the security system.

22. The equipment of any of claims 19 to 21, being one of computer
30 equipment, games equipment, audio, video or communications equipment, in car equipment, household appliances, and school, hospital, or business equipment.

23. A remote key transmitter unit (90, 420) for use with the security system of any of claims 1 to 18, or with the consumer equipment of any of claims 19, 21 or 22.

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24. A method of detecting stolen consumer equipment by using a wireless receiver (70) to recognise a beacon signal indicating a stolen status, output by the consumer equipment (60) of any of claims 19, 21 or 22.

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25. A method of operating a service (90) of tracing ownership of recovered consumer equipment as set out in any of claims 19 to 22, when dependent on claim 3 or claim 16, having the steps of:

receiving an identifier from the stolen equipment, and
decoding the identifier to determine the owner.

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